

Remarks

Following a careful review of the Office Action and the prior art relied upon by the Examiner, claim 1 has been amended in a manner to clarify the invention.

Amended claim 1, among other things, calls for the loop to have opposite ends that are connected with the support arm at offset locations such that an open space is presented above the support arm between the loop and the support arm. This structure is readily evident from FIG. 9 of the application drawing which shows the loop 107, the support arm 106, and the open space which is presented generally beneath the loop 107 and entirely above the arm 102.

It is respectfully submitted that Malik shows nothing remotely like this. The Examiner has cited the circular sockets that receive the shoe supporting rods in the Malik patent as constituting “loops”. First of all, these sockets are just that, sockets, and their function is to receive the shoe supporting rods and not to form any type of side barrier. Secondly, the sockets in the Malik structure do not project above the “support arms” at all and certainly not enough that they could serve as an effective side barrier.

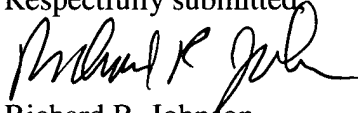
Additionally, and perhaps more significantly, the Malik sockets do not provide any type of open space at all and certainly do not provide any type of open space that is above the support arm, a feature disclosed only by the present Applicants (and readily evident in FIG. 9 of the application drawings).

For these reasons, amended claim 1 recites a shoe rack that is structurally different than anything taught by Malik and performs a function effectively that cannot be performed by the Malik invention. Consequently, amended claim 1 calls for a shoe rack that is both novel and represents a significant advancement over what is taught by Malik and other known prior art.

In view of the amendment that has been made to the claim and the foregoing remarks, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in full condition for allowance. It is additionally pointed out that the problems pointed out by the Examiner regarding the abstract have been corrected.

It is believed that this application is now in condition for allowance, and a formal notice to that effect is respectfully requested in due course. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference will in any way be beneficial to the advancement of this case, she is invited to call the number listed below at her convenience.

Respectfully submitted,



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The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional amount required, or credit any overpayment, to Account No. 19-2112. A duplicate copy of this sheet is enclosed.